

CHAPTER XII

Centralized Unit Training for Army Service Forces

One of the first signs of the emerging importance of engineer service units after Pearl Harbor was the organization and training of over sixteen thousand men for construction in the Middle East and in the United Kingdom.¹ Only a fraction of this number went to the Middle East. Instead, most of these men were absorbed into the broadening stream of service unit activations which followed the publication of the troop basis of July 1942. From mid-1942 on, preparation of service units claimed a large part of the Engineers' training effort. Whereas AGF and AAF were responsible for engineer ground force units and engineer aviation units, the Corps of Engineers itself, under the general direction of ASF, assumed the primary job of developing engineer service units.

West Camp Claiborne: The Experimental Phase

The five special service regiments, seven general service regiments, and ten dump truck companies which the Engineers activated for special construction jobs in the spring of 1942 were to construct ports, roads, railroads, barracks, and shops—jobs which required a high proportion of foremen and skilled workers. Since these units were needed long before such a highly skilled group of men could be trained, the

War Department allowed the Engineers to recruit men under forty-five who had civilian experience requisite for the positions. Under the assumption that these men would be technically qualified for their jobs, the units were to have only six weeks of basic military training before assignment overseas.²

In searching for a camp where training could begin immediately the Engineers found only one site large enough—West Camp Claiborne, Louisiana. It was a temporary field tent camp in rather poor condition which even after much improvement was never considered desirable for training engineer units. Large numbers of troops were already concentrated in several nearby camps, at Polk, Livingston, Beauregard, and the main camp at Claiborne, as well as at three airfields near Alexandria. Recreational facilities at the adjacent towns were overtaxed. Training areas were restricted, and firing ranges were insufficient. But since the Engineers did not intend to give these construction units any tactical or technical training and did not contemplate occupa-

¹ See above, pp. 143–44.

² Unless otherwise cited, this section on the Claiborne PEOC is based upon: (1) 322, Engrs Corps of, Activation of Constr Units, Folders 1 and 2 (S); (2) 353, ASFTC Claiborne, Pt. 1; (3) 322, ASFTC Claiborne; (4) 320.2, ASFTC Claiborne; (5) 333.1, ASFTC Claiborne; (6) 319.1, ASF Engr Units, Pt. 1.



BRIG. GEN. JOHN W. N. SCHULZ, *seated next to driver, and members of his staff, West Camp Claiborne, La., 1942.*

tion of the camp for more than four months, the site did not have to be ideal.

West Claiborne was located approximately sixteen miles southwest of Alexandria in the rolling cutover timber land of the Kisatchie National Forest. It lay about two and a half miles from the main camp and occupied very rough and broken ground on the south slope of a ridge cut by several drainage valleys. At the time the Engineers decided to move in, during March 1942, it presented a desolate picture of bare tent frames, a few small administrative and mess buildings with felt paper siding and no flooring, pit latrines, and an open drainage sewage system. Gravel roads connected the main parts of the camp but there were no

sidewalks or duckboards. Tents and buildings had been laid out on a set plan without reference to local topography and part of the camp was subject to frequent flooding by surface water. The impervious red clay underlying the thin sandy topsoil served when wet to form a thick plastic mass in which vehicles mired to the axles whenever they left a prepared roadbed.³

Brig. Gen. John W. N. Schulz, who was to supervise the training of the units at Clai-

³ (1) Completion Rpt 1942, West Camp Claiborne No. 4, 15 Jun 42, p. 1. (2) Ltr, Col W. N. Taylor to TIG, 12 Feb 42, sub: Special Investigation of Constr Activities of Temporary Tent Camp at Camp Claiborne, La. 652, Claiborne, Vol. 3. (3) Memo, Robins for Schulz, 4 Apr 42, sub: Additional Constr West Camp Claiborne, La. Same file.

borne, came from Under Secretary of War Patterson's office, where he had served as Director of Purchases and Contracts. In March 1942, Schulz made a preliminary survey of the Claiborne site during several days of constant rain. In a depressed mood he wrote the Chief of Engineers detailing the many deficiencies of the camp, concluding that "the use of west Camp Claiborne for the Organization Center is not desirable if it can be avoided . . . [but] there appears to be no alternative" He predicted gloomily that "this will mean, almost certainly . . . that this camp, once used, will be continued in permanent, or at least frequent, intermittent use" ⁴ His prediction proved correct. Within a few months West Camp Claiborne developed into the first Engineer Unit Training Center. General Schulz remained in command until October 1943. ⁵

To supervise the training of these units through mid-July, Schulz set up a Provisional Engineer Organization Center (PEOC) on 1 April. The Claiborne PEOC consisted of a small group of fourteen officers selected from the pool under the control of the Chief of Engineers and sixty-three enlisted men from the ERTC's at Belvoir and Wood. In the tactical units themselves commanders of all but two of the twelve regiments were Engineer officers with previous military experience in the Regular Army, National Guard, or Engineer Reserve. Each regiment had two former sergeants; one served as adjutant and the other as supply officer. The rest of the unit officers were commissioned from civilian life on the basis of their construction experience. Regimental commanders recruited many of them personally. District Engineers recommended some. OCE selected still others from appli-

cations on file. A trucking association furnished officers for a number of the dump truck companies. Cadres, chosen largely from men found surplus in grade upon the triangulation of square divisions, came from the Second and Third Armies. The poor quality of the cadres so obtained would indicate that the divisions disposed of many undesirables in this manner. Realizing that the draft would fail to produce the 10,000 specialists required for these units, the Engineers conducted an intensive campaign for voluntary enlistments between 10 April and 20 May. In an attempt to get the right proportion in each specialty, reception centers all over the country screened these fillers for assignment to Claiborne. ⁶

Cadres and fillers were supposed to arrive at Claiborne in six increments, one week apart, the cadres one week ahead of their respective fillers. The normal weekly increment was to be two regiments and two dump truck companies. If no other units had been ordered in, the center would have built up to a peak load in the latter part of May and dwindled thereafter. Cadres for the first units arrived on schedule on 15 April, fillers a week later.

Training under a special six-week MTP, derived from the eight-week program then in effect at the ERTC's, began on 27 April. Since the men were supposed to be technically competent already, this MTP went

⁴ Memo, Schulz for CofEngrs, 25 Mar 42, sub: Engr Orgn Center for Constr Regts and Dump Truck Cos. 322, Engrs Corps of (S).

⁵ GO 32, Camp Claiborne, 20 Oct 43. EHD file, EUTC Orders, 1942-44.

⁶ (1) GO 12, OCE, 1 Apr 42. (2) List of COs Constr Regts, 12 Mar 42. 322, Engrs Corps of (S). (3) Ltr, TAG to CGs, Second, Third Armies, SOS, and Fourth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Corps Areas, 24 Mar 42, sub: Activation of Engr Units Required for Militarization of Overseas Projects. 210.3, Engrs Corps of, Pt. 21.

even further than the abbreviated ERTC program in eliminating Engineer subjects: ⁷

	<i>ERTC</i> <i>Eight Weeks</i>	<i>PEOC</i> <i>Six Weeks</i>
Total.....	352	244
Basic.....	92	90
Technical		
Combat.....	86	80
Engineer.....	102	36
Tactical.....	40	14
Open time.....	32	24

With its emphasis entirely upon the production of an individually trained soldier, this program could scarcely be called unit training. It included no practical training in engineer tasks. There was no provision for building roads, bridges, or obstacles, no time allowed for demonstrations in rigging or general construction. There were no night operations, and there was but a minimum of tactical teamwork. The time given to basic military subjects was almost equal to that at the ERTC's.

Conditions at the PEOC made even this simplified program difficult to administer. The two officers and eight enlisted men in the Training Section proved insufficient for the guidance and control of 16,000 men. Capable unit officers and enlisted men had to be called upon frequently for staff duty. The details of actual training were to be handled by the unit officers, but except for the regimental commanders the unit officers had no more military experience than the troops. These new officers were not commissioned on schedule and after commissioning had several days of leave before reporting to the PEOC. According to the harassed executive officer they were "fooling around all over the country." ⁸ After arrival, they had to have two weeks of indoctrination before assignment to training duty. In the meantime, the bulk of the responsibility fell upon

a group of forty officers loaned to the center from the ERTC's in the latter part of April. A few of these ERTC officers ran a school for the new unit officers. Others moved along from one regiment to another, staying only until the incoming unit officers qualified for duty. Another temporary source of experienced trainers was the group of officers that brought the cadres to the center, some of whom were held as long as four weeks before being returned to their home stations. The forty officers on temporary assignment began to receive orders to other stations by late May, just as the training load reached its height. After repeated appeals from Schulz for a more permanent staff, OCE on 1 July finally increased the allotment of officers to the PEOC headquarters from fourteen to forty.⁹

An equally serious obstacle in preparing these units for overseas service was the failure by the reception centers to provide fillers at the right times, in sufficient amounts, and with desired skills. Despite the special recruiting, too few men from the construction industry found the prospect of military service attractive. With the military construction program approaching its peak, jobs were plentiful and working on them was considered patriotic. Some corps areas fell short of their quotas by several hundred. At the end of May six of the units had been forced to postpone training a week or more be-

⁷ (1) MTP—Engr Constr Regts and Dump Truck Cos [26 Mar 42]. 322, Engrs Corps of, Activation of Constr Units, Folder 1 (S). (2) See Table 5.

⁸ Tel Conv, ExO PEOC to C of O&T Br, 20 Apr 42. 322, Engrs Corps of, Activation of Constr Units, Folder 1 (S).

⁹ (1) Ltr, CG PEOC to CofEngrs, 2 Jun 42, sub: Offs for EOC, Camp Claiborne, La. 210.3, ASFTC Claiborne, Pt. 1. (2) Ltr, C of Mil Pers Br to CG PEOC, 1 Jul 42, sub: Allot of Offs, AUS. 320.21, ASFTC Claiborne.

cause of delays in receiving fillers. Dump truck companies had not filled at the same time as the regiments with which they were to operate. The first ten regiments and corresponding dump truck companies had received only 1,535 of the 5,750 specialists needed in some seventeen categories. The same units contained a surplus of 2,413 non-specialists. Schulz, perturbed lest the units reflect no credit upon the center or the Engineers, wrote to Sturdevant in early May:

I am deeply concerned about the matter since the regiments at Claiborne will be supplanting contractors' trained employees who have been carefully selected at premium pay and should be expected to have developed construction teams of considerable efficiency. The regiments, on the contrary, are untried aggregations of individuals selected more or less by chance and, at present, lacking many of the necessary skills. . . . At best the contrast between the contractor's performance and the regiment's may be expected to be unfavorable until they have developed some team play. . . . Any delays or falling off in production will subject the Corps and the regimental commanders to severe criticism.¹⁰

The specialist shortage reached 3,126 by mid-July. Withdrawal of OCS candidates and cadres for future units, sickness, and physical disqualifications further depleted the ranks. Such losses became critical when the first few units began to move out. Since they were required to leave at full strength, the center resorted to transferring men from later units to fill the earlier ones. By the end of July, when all twelve should have completed basic training, the enlisted complement of the last regiment numbered only 250 men. The entire unit had to be refilled and retrained.

Equipment and training areas were no more adequate than cadres and fillers. Equipment was supposed to arrive by 10 April and training areas were to be ready

by the end of that month. However, publications such as field and training manuals, Army regulations, and War Department circulars could not be obtained in any quantity until July. Office supplies had to be borrowed for weeks. Shelter halves, packs, web equipment, and clothing were scarce for months. Despite the fact that the main emphasis was to be placed upon basic military training, no rifles appeared. In desperation, the center borrowed 1,600 Enfields from the main camp, but this number was insufficient for both general training and range work and the whole arrangement was unsatisfactory since the rifles were subject to recall at any time. The center at first used the crowded 100-target range at the main post during rigidly scheduled time allotments. The construction of 200 additional targets and the acquisition of 7,216 Springfields and Enfields in mid-July seemed a vast improvement to the officers at West Claiborne, but they continued to press for the authorized allotment of 11,459 M1's and carbines and for machine guns. The lack of suitable inclosed buildings for assembly and instruction further handicapped training. The only place to show training films during daylight hours was at the main camp theater, two and a half miles away.

Although it was soon apparent that most of the men classified as truck drivers needed specific instruction and experience in driving and maintaining military vehicles, the urgent administrative needs for the few vehicles on hand precluded their use for this purpose. When the first two regiments and dump truck companies began to fill in late April, the center had only two trucks for over 2,000 men—less than enough to haul

¹⁰ Ltr, CG EOC Claiborne to ACofEngrs, 8 May 42. 322, Engrs Corps of, Activation of Constr Units, Folder 2. (S).

rations. Again the center resorted to borrowing, and finally a few trucks were issued to the units; yet there were still none for training drivers by mid-May when another crisis developed. Just as the PEOC approached its peak strength, the borrowed trucks had to be returned. There remained but twenty-five trucks for 16,000 men. A constant shuttle had to be maintained to get the incoming men and baggage from the troop trains. Perishable foodstuffs lay neglected. The hauling of rubbish and nonfood garbage was virtually abandoned. Sufficient trucks for pickup and delivery arrived in June, but none were forthcoming for driver instruction on the low priorities assigned. Schulz was convinced that unless driver training could be given the units would experience difficulty even in such a fundamental maneuver as moving vehicles from shipside. Two sets of heavy construction machinery—one for a general service and one for a special service regiment—arrived toward the end of April. The amount received sufficed to familiarize experienced construction men with the particular makes and models they would be using overseas and provided an opportunity to turn some of the men with no construction background into construction machinery operators.¹¹

This attempt to add specialist training to an already crowded six-week program was indicative of the spirit of the PEOC. The small, overworked, but determined staff put in long hours of planning and supervision to overcome the worst effects of the primitive housing conditions, the poor quality of cadres, the military inexperience of the unit officers, the shortage of technically trained fillers, and insufficient weapons and equipment. Yet, had it not been for the high quality and responsible attitudes of the fillers, the obstacles might still have been overwhelm-

ing. Intelligent, mature, anxious to learn, willing to sacrifice much during the brief training period, these men maintained a healthy outlook and a high sense of mission.

The decision not to employ these units on construction in the Middle East and the United Kingdom as originally intended provided the necessary time for a more rounded program of training. Only the first few of the twenty-two units moved out with six weeks or less instruction. The majority remained for twelve weeks or more. In the absence of any definite information on when the remaining units would leave or where they would go, the PEOC staff determined upon a decentralized plan of concurrent basic military and unit training. Units prepared their own extended schedules based on the construction projects assigned to them and their own knowledge of their basic military deficiencies. Construction of a permanent nature provided valuable experience in organization and teamwork for any eventual employment.

Beginning early in June the regiments bivouacked in the field from one to three weeks on a variety of projects. Two regiments and four dump truck companies at a time worked on the Claiborne-Polk Military Railroad then being constructed between these two camps. One regiment alone laid 22 miles of ties and rails on this road, graded part of the hospital grounds and parade field, built 1.5 miles of road including two highway bridges, repaired an additional 7.1 miles of road, and built an office building complete with wash rooms and sep-

¹¹ (1) Memo, C of O&T Br for C of Proc and Distr SOS, 22 May 42, sub: Shortage of Motor Vehicles and Ord Matériel at EOC Camp Claiborne, La. 451.2, ASFTC Claiborne. (2) 1st Ind, 30 May 42, on Memo, ExO PEOC for CofEngrs, 20 May 42, sub: Equip for Units, EOC Camp Claiborne. 413.8, ASFTC Claiborne.



PONTON EQUIPAGE BEING UNLOADED *at water-filled gravel pit six miles from West Camp Claiborne, La., October 1942.*

tic system for the PEOC headquarters. On smaller tasks the regiments rotated battalions in the field while continuing supplementary basic military training for those at the camp. The additional time also allowed the units to bring the PEOC-trained construction machinery operators to a higher standard of performance through on-the-job training. Highly skilled operators from two regiments acted as instructors and supervisors of projects undertaken by less qualified regiments. The camp itself profited much from such projects. In addition to the rifle range, office building, and parade ground, the regiments constructed two obstacle courses and developed areas for training in field fortifications, antitank obstacles,

camouflage, and demolitions in preparation for the more extensive engineer training to be given in the future. Dump truck companies lived in the field with the regiments to which they were attached and to the relief of Schulz received excellent driving experience and convoy practice hauling ties, rails, and ballast for railroad construction, materials for bridging, and dirt for roads and grading projects. Even though in the end the regiments and dump truck companies received much more practical training than had been planned, equipment shortages and topography imposed limitations. The two sets of construction machinery which had been adequate for familiarization were not sufficient for the unit train-

ing of so many regiments. No instruction in quarrying could be given in a country without rock nor could there be fixed or floating dock construction in the immediate area, which had no large bodies of water or streams of any size.¹²

West Camp Claiborne: The Permanent Center

Despite the unfavorable features of West Camp Claiborne, the Engineers became convinced that they had found the way to provide efficient unit training. A concentration of like units at one place made a small allowance of scarce equipment serve numerous units at the same time. Moreover, many of the ASF engineer units being activated in 1942 had officers drawn directly from comparable civilian positions but who had no knowledge of military procedures. A grouping of such units under the supervision of a few capable Engineer officers would provide uniform training with the least possible diversion of seasoned officers from troop duty.¹³

In June 1942, when the future of the center beyond 15 July was still in doubt, Schulz, despite his earlier misgivings, began to emphasize to OCE the importance of retaining the center for subsequent units. On 20 June O&T assured him that SOS was supporting the center against the opposition of AGF which also wanted the space. The final decision was in the hands of G-3 who seemed favorably inclined toward the Engineers. At any rate, OCE had authority to activate two more general service regiments at Claiborne under the same arrangements as before and it seemed likely that the center would not be closed on 15 July. Schulz, dissatisfied with this temporary reprieve, insisted that the provisional stage

should not be prolonged indefinitely. By 29 June the final decision had been made. The Engineers were to retain West Camp Claiborne as a permanent Engineer Unit Training Center (EUTC), the pioneer unit training center in all the Army. Between July 1942 and the summer of 1943, when two new EUTC's at Camp Ellis, Illinois, and Camp Sutton, North Carolina, opened, all but a small fraction of ASF engineer units trained at Claiborne. As many as 31,000 men trained there at one time during the peak training period in the fall of 1943 and the average number in training each month during 1943 and 1944 was 23,000 and 16,500, respectively. In July 1942 the Engineers began to concentrate at Claiborne those units which required quantities of heavy equipment. The bulk of the many general service regiments and dump truck companies and all of the few special service regiments trained there. Heavy shop companies, base equipment companies, foundry

¹² (1) Ltr, Adj PEOC to CofEngrs, 19 Jul 42, sub: Status of Tng. 319.1, ASF Engr Units, Pt. 1. (2) Ltr, Adj PEOC to CofEngrs, 25 Jul 42, sub: Status of Tng. Same file.

¹³ With exceptions hereafter noted, this section on the permanent center is based upon: (1) 353, ASFTC Claiborne, Pts. 1, 2; (2) 320.2, ASFTC Claiborne; (3) 320.21, ASFTC Claiborne; (4) 353, ASFTC Claiborne, Tng Offs for Units, Bulky; (5) 322, ASFTC Claiborne; (6) 330.13, Claiborne; (7) 413.44, ASFTC Claiborne; (8) 475, ASFTC Claiborne; (9) 353.15, ASFTC Claiborne; (10) 353, Engr Heavy Shop Units, Claiborne, Bulky; (11) 413.8, ASFTC Claiborne; (12) P&T Div file, Forestry Units; (13) Rpt, Col E. G. Paules, Engr Member WD Obsvr's Bd to CofEngrs, 16 Feb 44, sub: ETO Engr Obsvr's Rpt 2, 370.2, ETO (S); (14) Ltr, Adj EUTC to CofEngrs, 16 Dec 42, sub: Capacity of EUTC, with Incl 2, Units in Tng as of Midnight 15-16 Dec 42, 353, Claiborne (C); (15) Memo, Brotherton for Gorlinski, 12 May 43, sub: School Tng at the EUTC, Camp Claiborne, La., P&T Div file, Inspec—Claiborne; (16) Unit Training in the Corps of Engineers, 1 Jul 39-30 Jun 45, MS prepared by Mil Tng Div, OCE (hereafter cited as Unit Tng). EHD files.

detachments, petroleum distribution companies, and forestry companies, all of which needed permanent or semipermanent installations of heavy machinery, received instruction there from then on.

Once in command of a permanent unit training center, Schulz tackled the many complications accompanying its growth from a capacity of 16,000 to 25,000 men. He determined he would not run the EUTC on the shoestring basis of the PEOC. In June 1942 he prepared a T/O for 137 officers and 516 enlisted men, apologizing for the large size of the new organization only to the extent of hoping that it would not occasion too much shock and surprise in OCE. By mid-September his request had been approved and the officers allotted. The following month SOS approved a reduced enlisted allotment of 414 men.¹⁴

Meanwhile, Schulz worked out the procedures which he felt would best capitalize upon the advantages and opportunities inherent in a training center and at the same time sustain the continuity of leadership of the unit officers. The commanders were responsible for the conduct of training within their own units. At the outset, while awaiting fillers, unit officers were to prepare training schedules, subject to the approval of the EUTC Training Division, emphasizing weapons instruction and military discipline. Thereafter, the Training Division provided weekly schedules for each unit—schedules which showed an hourly breakdown of each day by subject, lesson number, and training area. Also provided were detailed lesson outlines for each subject, enough copies for each officer and NCO in each unit, including text references, lists of films, and a general plan of presentation. The EUTC staff manufactured training aids and distributed them as needed

from a central warehouse. The center provided a supervisor at each of these sites to suggest the best use of these aids, to answer questions put by the unit officers, and to report to S-3 upon the quality of instruction.¹⁵

The number and the variety of units made it impossible for Schulz to maintain close personal contact with each unit. By October 1942 the center contained four regiments, eight separate battalions, and twenty-four companies or detachments, about 14,000 men in all, with prospects of six more regiments and three battalions to be activated soon. Since most of the unit officers had only a few weeks of military service and needed constant supervision, Schulz prepared in early October a decentralized organization which grouped the units into three training brigades of manageable size. OCE was reluctant to present this plan to SOS for approval, doubtless because it included a request for three brigadier generals.

Meanwhile, Schulz took matters into his own hands. He placed the diverse small units, equal in strength to two general service regiments, in a provisional battalion under the direction of an officer borrowed from one of the general service regiments. At the end of October he reorganized his entire command. On 1 November he announced to Sturdevant that he had taken advantage of the assignment of three Regular officers to the center to set up provisional training brigades and regiments. Around this windfall of three colonels the center was organized into two brigades. All of the regiments and most of the dump truck companies were placed in the first brigade.

¹⁴ Ltr, Actg C of O&T Br to CG EOC, 17 Sep 42, sub: Table of Pers. P&T Div file, Orgn ASFTCs.

¹⁵ Tng Memo 1, EUTC Claiborne, 22 Feb 43. EHD file, Tng Memos, Claiborne, 1943-44.

The second brigade was divided into two training regiments, one containing railway units, later transferred to the control of the Transportation Corps; the other a concentration of the smaller units in three battalions. In the first battalion were heavy shop companies; in the second, petroleum distribution companies and equipment companies; in the third, fire fighting detachments, utilities detachments, and depot companies. The executive officer of the center commanded the first brigade, and the three new officers the second brigade and the two training regiments.

A week later, Schulz explained his dilemma to his former boss, Under Secretary of War Patterson, who was in Louisiana inspecting several camps. A few days later Patterson, attending an SOS staff conference, expressed great satisfaction with the Claiborne EUTC. About the same time he wrote a note to Reybold commending the state of training at the center but strongly urging that the EUTC be reorganized into two training brigades. The Chief of Engineers replied that Schulz could set up whatever training groups he pleased, but an allocation of brigadier generals was out of the question.

Despite the fact that by November 1942 the center had an increased personnel allotment and a more efficient organization, neither development brought permanent relief. The new organization depended upon the three Regular Army officers assigned to units in training and therefore available for only thirteen weeks. At the end of this time Schulz repeated his request for three brigadier generals. In March 1943, the center finally gained a permanent allotment of three colonels and was reorganized into three brigades. By this time the railway units had been removed and more regiments

added. The three brigades held, respectively, thirty-four small units, four Negro regiments, and eight white regiments.¹⁶

The 414 enlisted men authorized in October 1942, although an enormous increase over the 63 allotted to the PEOC, was still far short of the 516 requested. The center was expected to make the 414 suffice without impressing men from the units for staff duty. Troops in training were to train. But after a short period of attempting to operate within the 414 ceiling, Schulz concluded that he could not expect these men to continue indefinitely at such a pace. By 1 December he succeeded in getting approval for 239 additional men. Although this number was ample for a time, the continued expansion caused the center to resort to the same expedient as before. By May 1943 the Training Division alone was using 150 men from the units, spreading the loss of training by taking men for only a week at a time from any one unit.

In June 1943 an ASF directive on economies in manpower caught the center unprepared. ASF assumed that the major organizations under its control had reached their peak strength, that they were well established, and that personnel allotments were stabilized and adequate. Increases were to be discouraged. Decreases were expected everywhere. The directive restricted the use of pool officers for staff duty and prohibited altogether the use of enlisted men from troop units.¹⁷ The EUTC was by this time drawing between 350 and 400 men from each source, in addition to the 145 officers and 653 enlisted men then authorized.

¹⁶ (1) Ltr, CG EUTC to CofEngrs, 9 Oct 42, sub: Improved Tng Orgn, EUTC. 210.3, ASFTC Claiborne, Pt. 1. (2) Min, Staff Conf SOS, 11 Nov 42, sub: Résumé of Matters Presented at Staff Conf, 1000, 10 Nov 42. 337, Staff Confs ASF (S).

¹⁷ ASF Cir 39, 11 Jun 43.

Fortunately, although the Eighth Service Command was required to reduce its total personnel, the EUTC in July received increases in quotas to 165 officers and 856 enlisted men, and for the first time some civilian employees.

The paucity of officers and enlisted men allotted to the EUTC during the period of greatest expansion from July 1942 to July 1943 was but one indication of the generally bare subsistence level which obtained. Not until February 1943 did the conversion of tents to hutments begin to catch up with the number of men in training. By that time there was space for 19,290 men in huts and 5,668 in tents, with eighteen men in each fifteen-man hut and six in each pyramidal tent. As at the ERTC's vehicle and equipment shortages plagued the EUTC during most of this time, restricting some important phases of training. Because of the manpower pinch, fillers were slow in arriving. Nevertheless, the job was accomplished. The leadership of Schulz, the ability of the center staff, and the willingness of all concerned to put in long hours of planning and working eased the growing pains. Most important, during this period the center began to give real unit training.

Until July 1942 the training had differed little from the abbreviated program of the ERTC's. The emphasis had been upon individual basic military training. The main difference was that at Claiborne the men were organized into tactical units under their own officers instead of into training battalions.

The change-over to genuine unit training came on 25 July 1942 when OCE replaced the special six-week program with the regular unit training program of thirteen weeks. This regular program published in December 1941, incorporated with little change a

prewar program for combat engineer units. More than half the training period was allotted to technical Engineer subjects. Most of the subjects were spread throughout the whole thirteen weeks, with three major concentrations of subject matter. A unit started out with a basic period of two weeks. A company period of eight weeks and a battalion and regimental period of three weeks followed. All general construction, all technical night operations, most of the tactical night problems, and all battalion and regimental tactical and technical work in the field were concentrated in the last three weeks.¹⁸

In the thirteenth week of training each regiment had an opportunity to take part in a small-scale maneuver. The members of the unit were presumed by this time to be ready to assume the responsibilities of their positions and to demonstrate their ability to co-ordinate the many separate lessons learned in the past weeks. The center staff furnished observers who suggested changes in case of gross errors and provided an enemy force to simulate combat conditions.

In a typical unit problem a regiment defended a bivouac position. Each regiment marched with full field equipment to the designated area, constructed roadblocks, laid dummy mine fields, and built bridges essential to the assumed tactical situation. Surveyors and heavy equipment operators constructed road approaches with materials furnished by other teams working nearby gravel pits, and runners kept the regimental commander informed of all developments.

To test how well the unit could continue

¹⁸ (1) MTP—Engr Constr Regts and Dump Truck Cos [26 Mar 42]. 322, Engrs Corps of, Activation of Constr Units, Folder 1 (S). (2) MTP 5-1, 19 Dec 41.

to work under the harassing conditions of warfare there were attacks upon the position with simulated artillery fire and tanks, and attempted infiltration by night raiders. At times the attacks elicited too realistic a response. During one such maneuver, an indignant staff officer with the enemy force reported that some of the defenders wielded unsheathed bayonets and that "live Molotov Cocktails were used against our tank, cutting one P&T officer about the hands and face and soaking three officers with gasoline as well as spraying the interior of the tank with gasoline and glass."¹⁹ Observers not a part of the enemy force were sometimes captured and lost valuable time being processed as prisoners of war. Mistakes were inevitable, but this week in the field was an invaluable addition to the EUTC program. Officer control steadied. Men gained confidence in their unit. The EUTC could analyze individual and unit deficiencies and modify instruction accordingly.²⁰

The center, in the latter part of August 1942, had just begun to work out its course outlines and lesson plans to implement the thirteen-week program when SOS dictated a compulsory minimum basic military program of four weeks. As a consequence, by early September the thirteen-week program was not yet in full operation. Lesson plans were under preparation, training areas for the new tactical and technical subjects were not yet developed on the scale needed, and training methods had not yet crystallized. West Camp Claiborne appeared somewhat disorganized and disheveled, but, to the credit of the center, morale was undamaged.²¹

Actually, very little training was going on in early September, a hiatus between the final departure of the early units and the organization and filling of the new ones.

But by the end of 1942 six general service regiments and one special service regiment were in training under the new program. By April 1943 the number had increased to ten general service regiments and two special service regiments and by July to thirteen regiments.²²

Officers for these regiments had to have knowledge of construction techniques if the units were to function satisfactorily, for little combined training was contemplated between completion of the formal period of unit training and assignment overseas. OCE specified that the ideal officer should be a man between 35 and 45, physically fit for troop duty, and currently working in the construction industry, preferably as field superintendent or foreman. The Engineers wanted men who had bossed construction gangs, not topside management or professional engineers or architects. Essential was the ability to handle labor and a reputation for getting the maximum out of machinery consistent with its continuous operation. Although the Engineers found sufficient numbers of superintendents and foremen they were unable, even with the help of District and Division offices, to persuade the most capable to volunteer for commissions as company grade officers. Many of the

¹⁹ Ltr, 2d Lt W. C. White *et al.*, to Tactics Sec, 18 Jun 43, sub: Bivouac Problem of 393d Engr Special Sv Regt. EHD files.

²⁰ (1) *Ibid.* (2) Ltr, Tactics Sec EUTC to S-3 EUTC, 17 Jun 43, sub: Final Rpt on Tech-Tactical Problem Given 393d Engr Special Sv Regt. EHD files.

²¹ (1) Ltr, Dir Tng SOS, 28 Aug 42, sub: Basic Tng Program. Hq EAC, 353 Tng. (2) Hq SOS, Basic Tng Program for All RTCs and Sv Units of the Sup and Adm Svs of the SOS, Aug 42. Lewis, 353, Tng.

²² Prov Orgn of Units, EUTC West Camp Claiborne, 5 Jul 43. EHD file, Monthly Rpts, Claiborne, 1943-44.

men willing to leave construction jobs at this time were second-rate.²³

The two-week Officer Training School (OTS) in basic military training which had been started in April 1942 for the newly commissioned officers of the original regiments continued, but on a four-week basis. Between July 1942 and January 1943, when this course was lengthened to six weeks, some 821 officers completed the course before being assigned to their units. From January to the closing date, 3 July 1943, an additional 485 officers graduated. Meanwhile, in selecting officer candidates for schooling at Belvoir the center discovered enlisted men in these regiments who were just as well qualified for direct commissions as the officers currently being received. Accordingly, each regiment sent its best qualified enlisted men to the OTS course where they could be observed further. Some could be commissioned directly, others went to OCS. In addition to more general subjects, the course included a few hours in technical subjects such as aerial photograph reading and motor maintenance. A new class started each week, organized as a platoon or a company according to the number of students. Each student officer rotated through all of the positions from private to company commander in tactical situations in order to grasp the duties of each man under his future command. After July 1943, in compliance with ASF policy, all of this training was concentrated at the Engineer School.²⁴

A much larger task than preparing officers to assume command was that of insuring a sufficient number of enlisted men with appropriate skills to fill the noncommissioned foremen positions and to run the heavy construction and earth-moving machinery. Like potential officers, such men were few and far between until the decline

of military construction in the United States in the spring and early summer of 1943. The general run of recruits did not include nearly enough men with the proper qualifications. By mid-September 1942, when the first of the new units began to fill, the need for specialists had become acute. Three regiments were short a total of 1,564 specialists in twenty-one different categories, the greatest lack being in construction foremen, electricians, quarrymen, riggers, demolitions men, bridge carpenters, jackhammer operators, and general mechanics, with lesser shortages of draftsmen, water supply engineers, and sheet metal workers. To relieve this particular situation, SOS arranged with the Recruiting Section, The Adjutant General's Office, for a special drive during October and November much like that for the original regiments. As before, specified quotas of the various specialists were required of the service commands. Contractors furnished names of employees who were about to be inducted or about to enlist and of former employees already in the Army. Division Engineers helped publicize the need. On 27 November the last of these three regiments, activated in August, filled to operating strength.²⁵

²³ (1) Ltr, C of Mil Pers Br to New England Div Engr, 6 Nov 42, sub: Assistance in Off Proc. 210.1, Engrs Corps of, Pt 7.

²⁴ (1) Notes re the Hist of the EOC, EUTC, and ASFTC, Camp Claiborne, La., 1 Apr 42 to —. EHD file, EUTC, Gen. (2) Memo, Asst ExO Tng Div ASF for Cs of Svs, 12 May 43, sub: Schs for Offs at UTCs. EHD file, Spec Tng, EUTC, Heavy Shop. 1943-44.

²⁵ (1) Telg, CG PEOC to CofEngrs, 11 Sep 42, with 1st Ind, AC of Mil Pers Br to Dir Mil Pers SOS, 18 Sep 42. 341.3, Engrs Corps of, Pt. 1. (2) Ltr, AC of Mil Pers Br to CG EUTC, 1 Oct 42, sub: Proc of Enl Specs for Direct Asgmt to Camp Claiborne, La. Same file. (3) Ltr, AC of Mil Pers Br to Great Lakes Div Engr, 27 Nov 42, sub: Proc of Specs. 220.3, Engrs Corps of, Pt. 3.

By November, when it had become clear that fillers for future regiments could not be expected to have the skills necessary for many of the positions, the center began to organize specialist courses to train a portion of these men while the rest engaged in the technical and tactical work that followed the basic military program. Since some qualified men continued to arrive, the center made no comprehensive plans for opening courses for all of the specialists in the tables of organization. Instead, the courses provided instruction for enough men to fill out the number of specialists found to be short for each unit. Classes therefore fluctuated in size unpredictably. Courses began and ended according to the need for a particular specialist. Some courses were offered only a few times to fill a temporary shortage. Others were repeated for months. The number of weeks for each class was kept to an absolute minimum, two weeks in some courses, because the trainee was meanwhile missing the corresponding number of weeks of the regular program. In order to get men who would be interested, the center sought volunteers to attend the courses. But other factors had to be considered. As the specialist training program progressed, the center recommended that unit officers select these men carefully after personal interviews and a scanning of records to discover any secondary civilian interests approximating the skills needed. An AGCT score of 90 or better was desirable.

Mainly because of the small number of administrative personnel, center control over these courses lacked uniformity until well into 1943. Officers from the Training Division, aided by a few enlisted men from the headquarters company, taught the first courses in addition to their regular duties. As the number of courses increased, the

Training Division drew instructors from the officer pool and from units. The inevitable result was a constant turnover among instructors as pool officers were assigned to units, unit officers left with their organizations, and enlisted men were replaced by limited service personnel. The Training Division could do little more to insure competent instruction than to pick men who had some past qualifying experience. Some turned out to be good teachers, others did not. Competent or incompetent, the instructors themselves determined course content, wrote their own lesson outlines, produced their own training aids, and decided when tests should be given. The only check upon their performance was approval of plans and outlines and an occasional inspection. Since units had first priority on training facilities, it took close co-ordination to arrange for specialists to have access to them. In an effort to tighten up its control of the specialist courses the Training Division in February 1943 grouped all the courses under the supervision of one officer. Better co-ordination with the rest of the EUTC resulted. Not until May, after the center had acquired a larger administrative staff, could officers devote full time to specialist schooling.

By December 1942 the center had begun to produce draftsmen and surveyors from its own specialist courses. Expert surveyors could not be produced in a few weeks, but men with some mathematical background could be taught to use a transit, level, and planetable and qualify as instrument men, recorders, chainmen, and rodmen, for routine surveying. The course for draftsmen concentrated upon lettering, overlaying, topographical mapping, construction drawing, and the use of a slide rule. In January 1943, additional courses qualified operators

of power shovels, bulldozers, air compressors, road graders, earth augers, and rock crushers. Other courses trained motor mechanics, water supply specialists, machine gun crews, and camoufleurs.

By early 1943 the draft began to reach the eighteen-year old level and consequently produced fewer men with working experience. As the technical ability of fillers continued to drop, still other courses had to be added. Men selected as riggers learned the use of knots and lashings on tripods and gin poles, the advantages of simple block and tackle combinations, and the proper methods of cable splicing. Demolition specialists learned to prepare primers, firing caps, and explosive charges. Blacksmiths did repair work for the center after a short period of theoretical instruction in forging, shaping, and repair of tools. Mapping specialists worked out reconnaissance problems using a compass, collected field data such as bridge and road capacities and stream volumes, and transferred the information to maps, using the military grid system and the conventional signs, measurements, and contouring. The expansion of specialist courses was virtually completed by the end of June 1943. Within the next year over 15,000 specialists graduated.²⁶

The growth of the center and the addition of specialist training occurred during a time of general equipment shortages. The two sets of regimental equipment which the center had in July 1942 would not suffice for the unit exercises prescribed under the new program and for the training of specialists. No great quantities of additional equipment were at first requested because the units were supposed to receive their organic equipment upon activation. But the fact that these units were not to be rushed overseas immediately gave them a low

priority. Some of the equipment did not reach them until after they had left the EUTC. The center in October began to ask for a pool of organizational equipment equivalent to that for six regiments and individual equipment for 8,000 men, but construction machinery was not requested at this time since OCE insisted that these items would be supplied to the regiments upon activation. The continued growth of the EUTC, and the addition in late October of training for all engineer equipment companies soon created a shortage in construction machinery as well as in other organizational allowances. By the end of February 1943, adequate unit training in the regiments had become dependent again upon the receipt of organizational sets. During the next month, however, there began to be some relief as military construction projects in the United States began to taper off and District Engineers released quantities of used equipment. From this source the center built up by early summer a pool of 350 pieces of equipment, divided about equally between the units and the specialist courses.

A shortage of trucks resulted both from the rapid growth of the center and from the special issue method by which general purpose vehicles were furnished. On 25 November 1942, ASF authorized a pool to be used in turn by all units in training in order to obviate the necessity for issuing general purpose vehicles to each unit activated. If issues of additional vehicles had kept abreast of the growth of the center the system might have worked, but by May 1943 there had been no further issues. An effort by the EUTC to change the basis of issue to a table

²⁶ Tng Memo, Adj EUTC Camp Claiborne for All Unit Comdrs, 10 Jun 43, sub: Spec Tng of Enl Pers. EHD file, Tng Memos, Claiborne, 1943-44.

of allowances which would have included more trucks met with disapproval in March. Fortunately, while decision on the table of allowances was pending, some AGF regiments with full equipment were transferred from AGF to ASF control and to the center for training. The use of these vehicles for the whole EUTC brought about a short reprieve. When these units prepared to leave in May the shortage again became imminent. Additional vehicles were at last procured in the latter part of that month. Meanwhile, training exercises had been curtailed to conform to the amount of transportation available.

The center had so little ponton or other emergency bridging equipage that training had to be confined almost entirely to fixed trestle bridges. As late as April 1943 the center still had no Bailey bridges; practically none of the unit officers or men had even seen one. Additional training in bridging had to be given after these units arrived overseas.²⁷

By spring 1943 the lessons learned from the campaign in North Africa had begun to shape the training of engineer troops. Although training service units, the EUTC as well as the ERTC's placed greater stress upon combat engineer missions. General service regiments might well be called upon for combat duty. Exercises were stepped up to harden the troops physically. Training became more realistic. In June 1943 the center built a small village of ten houses in order to place mine and booby trap instruction in a more natural setting, since in actual warfare "everything must be examined for traps—innocent looking flowers, cabinets, books, tables, drawers in dressers, windows, doors and even commodes."²⁸ But a special issue of 600 M1 practice mines had to suffice for exercises in mine field laying, and not

until July 1943 did the center get a meager allowance of six standard mine detectors. Enemy mines and mine detectors could not be obtained at all. To demonstrate the power and tactical use of tanks the center borrowed from units at the main camp. When these units left Claiborne in late September 1942, instruction in antitank measures lost much of its realism. A request to OCE for five tanks and fourteen operators to replace this loss resulted in the approval on 9 December of two used tanks. The center had to furnish its own operators as best it could. Portable radios for co-ordination between umpires, inspectors, and units during tactical exercises were borrowed from AGF units at Claiborne until June 1943, when a special issue of ten radio sets was finally authorized.²⁹

Toward the end of 1942 the center received 3,543 M1 rifles. Never sufficient to go around, the M1's had to be shifted about constantly. The shortage of rifles was common to the ERTC's but the ERTC's did not suffer under the additional handicap of lack of military experience among the officers.

²⁷ (1) Ltr, O&T Br to CG EUTC, 11 Aug 43, sub: Rpt of Inspec Off, with 2d Ind, CG EUTC to CG Eighth SvC, 21 Aug 43. 333.1, ASFTC Claiborne. (2) Ltr, ExO EUTC to CofEngrs, 3 May 43, sub: Vehicle Rqmts, with 1st Ind, O&T Br to CG ASF, 13 May 43. 451, ASFTC Claiborne. (3) Ltr, ExO EUTC to CofEngrs, 27 Apr 43, sub: Request for Special Issue of Equip. 417, ASFTC Claiborne.

²⁸ Ltr, Obstacle Sec EUTC to American Legion, Alexandria, La., 25 Jun '43. EHD file, 353, Misc (Index) 1943, Claiborne.

²⁹ (1) Ltr, Adj EUTC to CofEngrs, 16 Apr 43, sub: Request for Credit of Ord Equip, with 1st Ind, 29 Apr 43. 476.1, ASFTC Claiborne. (2) Ltr, Adj EUTC to CofEngrs, 15 Jun 43, sub: Request for Tng Equip, with 1st Ind, 28 Jun 43. 413.6, ASFTC Claiborne. (3) Memo, ExO EUTC for CofEngrs, 16 Sep 42, sub: Light and Medium Tanks for Obstacle Tng, with 1st Ind, O&T Br to CG SOS, 25 Sep 42, with 2d Ind, SOS to CofOrd, 9 Dec 42. 470.8, ASFTC Claiborne.

Although SOS required 80 percent rifle qualifications, the EUTC in December qualified only 61 percent of its white trainees as compared with 81 percent at the ERTC at Belvoir and 73 percent at Wood. In an effort to raise the low scores at Claiborne, OCE in February 1943 arranged to send twenty-four officers with experience in basic military training at the ERTC's, two men a month from each center over a period of six months. At the same time, OCE secured ten infantry officers with special training in weapons for a temporary assignment of six months. Although instruction improved, the number of qualified men continued to be unsatisfactory. In April 1943 three general service regiments fell below the 50 percent mark mandatory for any unit before assignment overseas. By June the center estimated it would take 16,024 additional M1 rifles and 3,691 carbines to bring this instruction up to standard.³⁰

While the EUTC increased in size it also began to train many different types of units besides the general service regiments, special service regiments, and dump truck companies originally planned. Among these were nine heavy shop companies scheduled for activation during 1942. These units were designed to overhaul and reclaim unserviceable engineer equipment at a fixed base, furnish parts, and perform less extensive on-the-spot repairs wherever breakdowns occurred. Such work required heavy-duty fixed equipment for welding and forging, power-driven tools for manufacturing machined parts, and electrical facilities for reconditioning motors and generators. Truck-mounted shops were included for emergency repairs in rear areas not served by maintenance companies. Because separate equipment for so many companies could not be obtained before October 1942,

and the units were scheduled for early shipment overseas, the Engineers determined in late July to consolidate the training of all engineer heavy shop companies at Claiborne, and to set up one highly organized training installation to be used by all such units in rotation as they became active.

Several other factors besides economy of tools and machinery influenced the Engineers in the choice of Claiborne. Space was opening there as the original regiments and dump truck companies completed training and moved out. Several civilian vocational schools were nearby. One highly qualified, fully equipped, heavy shop company was already in training at the main camp in a prefabricated metal engineer shop company building. This unit could form a nucleus for the training of additional companies.

The reorganization of this heavy shop company into the Heavy Shop Training Section of the EUTC began in August 1942. Five officers from this company organized the section along company lines, with Capt. Eugene L. Davis, the commanding officer of the original company, at the head of the section. His permanent staff consisted of an officer for technical training, one for supply, one to supervise the manufacturing shop, and one to supervise the repair shop. Officers from units in training assisted in preparing lesson outlines and schedules, and in the supervision of work projects and tests. En-

³⁰ (1) Ltr, O&T Br to CG SOS, 12 Jan 43, sub: Issue of Bayonets to EUTC. 474.7, ASFTC Claiborne. (2) Memo, Asst ExO Tng Div SOS for CofEngrs, 30 Dec 42, sub: Antitank and Anti-aircraft Tng of Sv Units. 400.34 (S). (3) Ltr, O&T Br to CG EUTC, 5 Feb 43. 210.3, ASFTC Claiborne, Pt. 1. (4) Ltr, Mil Pers Br to CG EUTC, 24 Feb 43, sub: Temporary Duty Asgmt of Inf Offs as Trainers With the SOS. 210.3, Engrs Corps of, Pt. 24. (5) Ltr, Adj EUTC to CofEngrs, 28 Jun 43, sub: Request for Small Arms. 474.1, ASFTC Claiborne.

listed men did the actual instruction. In the absence of official provision for such instructors, the center selected about forty qualified men from the first few units, retaining them by transfer from one unit to another as the companies left the center. This method of holding experienced instructors was maintained throughout 1943 to supplement the ten enlisted men finally authorized. Four civilian master mechanics joined the staff in October 1942. By February 1943 the number of these key civilian instructors reached twenty-one.³¹

In the first shop units most of the men required only familiarization with military procedures and equipment. Fillers for two of these units had been experienced maintenance men recruited from the Associated Equipment Distributors of Washington, D. C., and from the Caterpillar Tractor Co. Shop companies formed later had fewer skilled men. By February 1943, the Engineers were getting only one fourth as many specialists for these units as they had in the beginning, but continuous co-operation among manufacturers, the Engineer Field Maintenance Office, OCE, and TAG assured the direct assignment upon induction of sufficient skilled men to fill the more responsible positions.³²

Upon the completion of basic training, the heavy shop units transferred to the Heavy Shop Training Section, which operated as a semi-independent organization with little EUTC control. After interviewing the men individually and determining which company position each could best fill, the section staff assigned them to small specialist sections. Men destined for manufacturing platoons went into machine shop, welding, blacksmith, or carpentry sections. Those for repair platoons began to repair electrical and nonelectrical instruments,

small tools, radiators, or heavy equipment. All spent five hours in the classroom and forty hours in the shop each week.³³

Although it had been recognized from the beginning that some men from these units would need specialized training to supplement civilian skills, it had also been assumed that most of this instruction could be given within the EUTC. This might have been the case had the fillers for the heavy shop companies arrived on schedule and with a better distribution of skills. But the companies activated in July, August, and September 1942 did not fill completely until mid-October and the units were supposed to move out at a rate of one each month after October. The quickest way to train the men without waiting for special equipment or for service school quotas was to send them directly to civilian schools and factories, despite the reluctance of OCE to circumvent War Department policy against duplication of facilities.

In anticipation of this need, Davis made a survey of the civilian schools and factories near Claiborne in July 1942. He decided at that time to use six steel and foundry companies at Kansas City, Missouri, for heavy machinery training and arranged for

³¹ (1) Memo, Engr Fld Maint Off for C of O&T Br, 18 Feb 43, sub: Master Mechanics for Camp Claiborne Tng Shop. 231.2, Claiborne. (2) Ltr, C of O&T Br to CG EUTC, 25 Feb 43, sub: Master Mechanics for Camp Claiborne. Same file. (3) Ltr, AC of O&T Br to CG Eighth SvC, 5 Oct 43, sub: Transfer of Master Mechanic Advisers. 230.36, ASFTC Claiborne. (4) Ltr, Eighth SvC to CofEngrs, 11 Nov 43, sub: Transfer of Master Mechanic Advisers. Same file.

³² Ltr, Engr Fld Maint Off to O&T Br, 18 Mar 43, sub: Asgmt of Inductees to Engr Orgns at EUTC, Camp Claiborne, La. 220.3, ASFTC Claiborne.

³³ (1) Ltr, Adj EOC to CofEngrs, 25 Jul 42, sub: Status of Tng. 319.1, ASF Engr Units, Pt. 1. (2) MTP 5-1, 19 Jun 43.

this instruction in October at no cost to the government. Two vocational schools—one at Lake Charles, Louisiana, and one at Pascagoula, Mississippi, provided courses at a minimum cost. Some skills, welding for one, could be mastered in a week or two, but regardless of difficulty, all of these courses lasted for eight weeks in order that the time might coincide with the technical training period of the EUTC.

By the end of February 1943, when the emergency need for these specialists had passed, OCE directed that all heavy shop technicians be trained thereafter at the EUTC or at special service schools. The center managed to duplicate most of the training of the Kansas City factories by doubling the civilian instructors for the section. Ordnance automotive schools supplanted vocational schools in training welders, machinists, and mechanics.³⁴

After eight weeks of technical training, thirteen weeks of unit training followed. The Heavy Shop Training Section found much to criticize in the allocation of hours and subjects. Too many hours were allotted to demolitions and defense against mechanized attack, too much time to motor and rail movement, too little to field operations. Most of the criticism stemmed from the fact that the heavy shop companies operated as fixed field installations. As finally worked out, the field training provision did not mean much more than a continuation of manufacturing and repair within the established shops.³⁵

Opinions on such "unit" training varied. Gorlinski, chief of O&T, admitted in August 1943 that the heavy shop companies were being trained in a "thorough and efficient manner" but believed that unit training was being neglected "in that the companies never function completely as a unit." He

pointed out that no one company did the entire job of overhauling any single tractor. One shift or company worked on the machine and then turned it over to the next shift.³⁶ One month later the Deputy Director of Military Training for ASF made a point of praising this system. "The training being given the heavy shop companies was excellent and can be considered as real 'unit training,'" he reported. "It was conducted in shops and with equipment similar to that they will be expected to use overseas. The shops were operated on three 8 hour shifts, each shift being in charge of a separate company. The training consisted of base shop repair of all types of engineer equipment, including a great deal of reclamation and manufacture of parts."³⁷

During the period March 1942 to June 1944 the EUTC trained sixteen heavy shop companies and activated three more, approximately 3,135 men. Meanwhile, the services of the Heavy Shop Training Section had been broadened to train men from other types of units—in March 1943 maintenance companies, and in August a few specialists for base equipment and petroleum distribution companies.³⁸

³⁴ 2d Ind, C of O&T Br to CG EUTC, 6 Nov 42, sub: Use of Civilian Manufacturing Plants for the Tng of Engr Heavy Shop Co Enl Pers (basic missing). 220.66, Pt. 4.

³⁵ (1) MPT 5-3, 15 Mar 43. (2) Memo, Brotherton for Gorlinski, 1 May 43, sub: Comments on MTP 5-1 and 5-3 by S-3 Sec EUTC. 353.01, Pt. 1. (3) Ltr, Actg ExO EUTC to CofEngrs, 10 May 43, sub: Proposed Plan of Instr During MTPs 5-1 and 5-3, with 1st Ind, 5 Jun 43. 353.01, ASFTC Claiborne.

³⁶ Ltr, C of O&T Br to CG EUTC, 11 Aug 43, sub: Rpt of Inspec Off. 333.1, ASFTC Claiborne.

³⁷ Memo, Deputy Dir Mil Tng ASF for Dir Mil Tng ASF, 8 Sep 43, sub: Inspec of Tng Estab at the UTC, Camp Claiborne, La. 353, ASFTC Claiborne, Hist of Mil Tng, Bulky.

³⁸ See Chapter XVIII for a full discussion of training petroleum distribution units.



WELDING DREDGE EQUIPMENT, a repair job undertaken by an Engineer heavy shop company, Leyte, February 1945.

The forestry company, another of the small special units which OCE began to assign to Claiborne, duplicated civilian lumber camps and sawmills. A headquarters platoon for administration, mess, and supply was also the planning section under the direction of the company commander whose position was that of a sawmill superintendent. A logging platoon headed by expert timber cruisers made stumpage estimates, felled timber, and hauled the logs to the mill. There the manufacturing platoon milled the logs into boards and beams for building and bridging, sorted and piled the lumber at a storage yard, and handled all shipments. The company had its own

maintenance mechanics for the repair of vehicles, tools, and machinery and carried its own electrical plant.³⁹

Although other national forest areas offered more mature timber, the Engineers wished to train these forestry companies at Claiborne because of the extensive basic military and tactical training facilities which had been developed there. In early December 1942 the Engineers found what they considered an adequate stand of timber within thirty miles of the camp, and the following month the Department of Agriculture agreed to release the area subject to

³⁹ FM 5-5, 11 Oct 43, Engr Troops, pp. 181-86.

certain restrictions providing for the care of young growth and the prevention of forest fires.

Training began in February 1943 with the transfer of the first of these companies from the A. P. Hill Military Reservation in Virginia. Another company joined the first in March and a third in April. In June, the first of the forestry battalions was activated with one headquarters company and three lettered forestry companies.

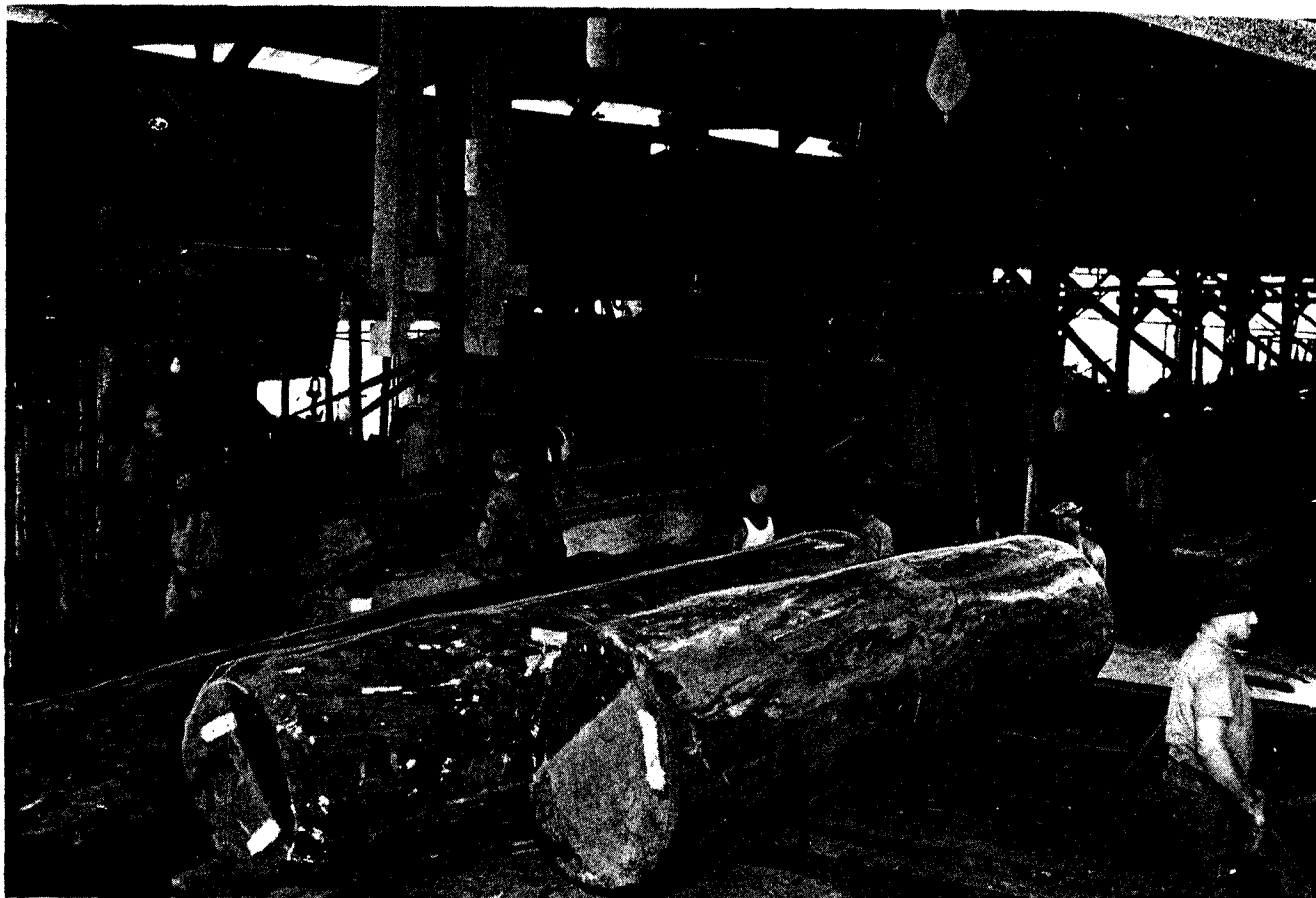
After five weeks of basic military training these companies began an eight-week program of tactical and technical work followed by thirteen weeks of unit work, with 198 hours of field operations. By the end of July two forestry companies were bivouacked in the forest area, operating mills and logging timber. The center encouraged these companies to produce the maximum amount of lumber for building and training materials and as a result curtailed more realistic exercises which should have included frequent dismantling and moving of the mills to new locations. Each of the two companies then in the field had moved only twice in thirteen weeks, an operation that took about two days from dismantling to resumption of operations. Each company hauled the lumber as it was sawed to the EUTC lumberyard instead of setting up a yard of its own to develop competent stackers, checkers, and stock clerks. Neither of the two companies had run the infiltration course or fired the familiarization course with its principal weapon, the carbine. Although fully armed, one of the companies was carrying wooden cutouts for both rifle and carbine on the excuse that the real weapons were difficult to take care of in the woods, got dirty, and were liable to be run over or otherwise damaged. Further lack of realism was apparent in the bunching to-

gether of the tents both for individual shelter and for mess and supply. All of them were placed so close to the mills that a bombing attack would have destroyed both the mills and most of the operators. Mill sites had been chosen for optimum working conditions with little regard for observation. Locations which would have given the troops some experience in operating under adverse conditions had been passed over on the grounds that they would cause difficulties in production.

If anything, these units were indeed too competent in the production of lumber. The timber in the training tract was almost exhausted by August 1943 when the companies of the forestry battalion were supposed to begin their eight weeks of technical instruction. In January 1944 the center had to seek a new tract. Through July of that year the forestry companies received basic military and tactical training at Claiborne and then moved to the Ninth Corps Area for technical and practical instruction in the mature timber stands of the Rogue River National Forest near Camp White, Oregon.⁴⁰

From February 1943 to June 1944, fifteen forestry companies or about 2,250 men received complete or partial training in basic military and technical subjects at Claiborne. All of the units shipped overseas by December 1944. The last eight organized went to the European theater, joining the first such company, which had trained at

⁴⁰ (1) MTP 5-1, 19 Jun 43. (2) MTP 5-3, 15 Mar 43. (3) Memo, AC of O&T Br for C of O&T Br, 31 Jul 43, sub: Tech Tng Inspec of Dump Truck and Forestry Cos at the EUTC Camp Claiborne, La. 353, Engr Dump Truck Units. (4) 1st Ind, OCE to CG Eighth SvC, 20 Jan 44, on Ltr, 12 Jan 44, sub: Tng of Engr Forestry Cos. 353, Engr Forestry Units. (5) Ltr, C of WPD to CG Ninth SvC, 11 Jul 44, sub: Tech Tng of Engr Forestry Cos. 353, Engr Forestry Co (C).



OVERSEAS SAWMILL *operated by men of an Engineer forestry company, 1943.*

Ft. Lewis in 1942. Although these nine companies exceeded all expectations in lumber production, and were indeed competent enough to run two sawmills each, they were too few to keep up with the requirements of the European theater. As many as twenty forestry companies could have been employed. Consequently, general service regiments and combat battalions, as well as numbers of civilians and prisoners of war, had to be enlisted for this work. Although the Southwest Pacific Area would have welcomed more forestry companies, the lack of these units was not serious because the nature of the climate and terrain permitted many types of improvisations which required little or no processed lumber.⁴¹

By July 1943 the Claiborne EUTC had trained and sent out 47,488 men in 85 units,

including 23 regiments. Most of these units were special types for which the Engineers secured officers and men with related civilian backgrounds, gave them only thirteen weeks of training, and sent them overseas without further joint training. The concentration at one place of units of this composition, needed within a very short time, was more effective than would have been the case had they been scattered among many posts and trained with less supervision. This

⁴¹ Liaison Sec Intel Div, Office of C Engr ETO, Hist Rpt 4, Troops, p. 115. AG Special Collection Opn Rpts. (2) *Final Report of the Chief Engineer, European Theater of Operations, 1942-1945* (Paris: Hervé et Fils [1946]), prepared in Office of C Engr ETO, 1946, p. 400. (Hereafter cited as *Final Engr Rpt, ETO.*) (3) Information from historian preparing the volume, *The Corps of Engineers: The War Against Japan.*

advantage, together with the exceptionally energetic and determined staff, in the end outweighed the equipment shortages, lack of sufficient training personnel, uncomfortable and inconvenient living conditions, too few fillers with civilian skills, and, in many cases, inadequate numbers of fillers.⁴²

One of the major criticisms of the center, perhaps valid, was that it lacked clear-cut lines of control. Schulz had taken exceptional advantage of the abilities of the men assigned to him and given varying degrees

of independence to those at the head of the various schools and training sections. To ASF representatives, accustomed to looking at elaborate organization charts, the result was lack of uniformity. To the busy men at the center, the system seemed both logical and efficient.

⁴² (1) EUTC West Camp Claiborne Highlights, 5 Jul 43. EHD file, Monthly Rpts, Claiborne, 1943-44. (2) Ltr, ExO Mil Tng Div ASF to CG Eighth SvC, 28 Oct 43, sub: Camouflage Tng, ASF Units. 353, Engr Mil Tng Div ASF.